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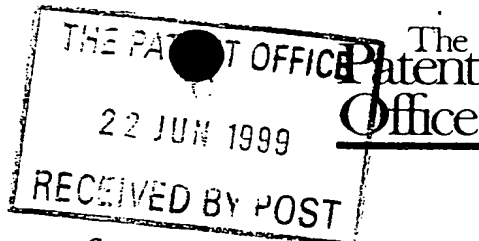
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The Patent Office

Cardiff Road
Newport
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22 JUN 1999

1. Your reference P24038/HGR/GMU

2. Patent application number
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9914414.9

3. Full name, address and postcode of the or of each applicant (underline all surnames)

Rocep Lusol Holdings Limited
Rocep Business Park
Kings Inch Road
Deanpark
RENFREW
PA4 8XY

Patents ADP number (if you know it)

If the applicant is a corporate body, give the country/state of its incorporation

United Kingdom

4. Title of the invention

"A Valve for use with Apparatus for Introducing a Predetermined Dose of Additive into a Liquid"

5. Name of your agent (if you have one)

Murgitroyd & Company

"Address for service" in the United Kingdom to which all correspondence should be sent (including the postcode)

373 Scotland Street
GLASGOW
G5 8QA

Patents ADP number (if you know it) 1198013

6. If you are declaring priority from one or more earlier patent applications, give the country and the date of filing of the or of each of these earlier applications and (if you know it) the or each application number

Country

Priority application number
(if you know it)

Date of filing
(day / month / year)

7. If this application is divided or otherwise derived from an earlier UK application, give the number and the filing date of the earlier application

Number of earlier application

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8. Is a statement of inventorship and of right to grant of a patent required in support of this request? (Answer 'Yes' if:

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Description 15

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Priority documents -

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Statement of inventorship and right to grant of a patent (Patents Form 7/77) -

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11. I/We request the grant of a patent on the basis of this application.

Signature *Graham Murnane*
Murgitroyd & Company

Date
21 June 1999

12. Name and daytime telephone number of person to contact in the United Kingdom
Graham Murnane
0141 307 8400

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1 A valve for use with apparatus for introducing a
2 predetermined dose of additive into a liquid

3

4 The invention relates to a single use valve which
5 allows fluid to pass from the interior of a tube to the
6 exterior, and in particular to a valve for use with a
7 container which automatically adds an additive in the
8 form of a liquid or a pourable solid to a liquid in the
9 container on opening of the container.

10

11 In a wide number of applications, such as
12 pharmaceuticals for both human and animal use,
13 agrochemicals and other more general applications it
14 may be necessary to release and mix a liquid catalyst
15 or reagent into a liquid before the liquid may be used.
16 In other applications, such as in the beverage
17 industry, it may be desirable to add a component to a
18 beverage immediately before consumption of the
19 beverage, for example to effect a colour change, or to
20 create a mixed beverage which has a limited storage
21 life in the mixed state.

22

23 British Patent Application No 9823578 discloses an
24 apparatus for introducing a component into a first
25 liquid, the apparatus comprising a first container ,

1 such as a bottle, which holds the first liquid. The
2 container has an opening closed by a releasable
3 closure. A second container or tank containing
4 pressurised propellant fluid is positioned in the neck
5 of the first container, adjacent to the opening. A dip
6 tube or conduit is attached to the tank, and has a
7 first end communicating with the tank and a second end
8 extending down into the first liquid in the first
9 container. The dip tube contains an additive which is
10 expelled from the dip tube into the first liquid by the
11 entry of the propellant fluid from the tank into the
12 conduit on release of the releasable closure.

13
14 The preferred form of dip tube is a polypropylene tube
15 of circular cross-section, typically having an internal
16 diameter of 5.8 mm. Such a tube has an internal
17 capacity of 0.26 ml for each 10 mm length, so an 80 mm
18 long tube can hold approximately 2 ml of product. The
19 tank typically has a capacity of 2 ml, and contains
20 pressurised propellant gas.

21
22 When the tank is of an impermeable material such as
23 metal, then the headspace required for the propellant
24 gas is only a proportion of the total tank volume,
25 leaving the remainder of the tank volume available for
26 product.

27
28 However when the tank is of a material such as plastic
29 which exhibits long term permeability, then the
30 headspace required for the propellant gas must be
31 maximised, and none of the tank volume is available for
32 product. In such cases it can be necessary to use
33 larger diameter dip tubes capable of holding more
34 product, and there is then a need for a valve
35 arrangement at the lower end of the dip tube so that
36 product does not drip into the first liquid in the

1 first container. The use of small diameter dip tubes
2 such as capillary tubes avoids the need for valves, but
3 such small diameter dip tubes can only hold a small
4 amount of product.

5
6 There is therefore a need for a simple, inexpensive
7 valve arrangement which prevents the product in a dip
8 tube from leaking or dripping into the first liquid in
9 the first container when the dip tube and first
10 container are at the same pressure, but which allows
11 the passage of liquid or pourable solid product from
12 the dip tube into the first liquid in the first
13 container when the dip tube is pressurised by
14 introduction of the propellant fluid.

15
16 According to a first aspect of the present invention
17 there is provided a valve comprising an expandable
18 tubular member and a sleeve member surrounding at least
19 a portion of said expandable tubular member, wherein
20 the expandable tube member has a closed end and at
21 least one aperture therein adapted to permit the
22 expulsion of fluid under pressure from the expandable
23 tube member, and is expandable between a first
24 unexpanded state in which the aperture is closed by
25 contact with either the sleeve or a part of the
26 expandable tubular member and a second expanded state
27 in which the aperture is open.

28
29 Preferably the expandable tubular member is of plastic,
30 most preferably of polypropylene. Preferably the
31 sleeve is of plastic, most preferably of polypropylene.
32 Preferably the tubular member and sleeve are both of
33 circular cross-section.

34
35 Preferably the expandable tubular member comprises a
36 corrugated portion adapted to concertina between said

1 unexpanded and expanded states. Preferably said
2 corrugated portion comprises a plurality of concertina-
3 like ribs, each rib comprising a length of tube of
4 increasing cross-sectional area and a length of tube of
5 decreasing cross-sectional area. Preferably said
6 sleeve comprises an inwardly directed flange at its
7 upper end remote from the closed end of the expanded
8 tubular member, adapted to engage with a corrugated
9 portion of the expanded tubular member.

10
11 There may be provided more than one aperture, arranged
12 circumferentially around the expandable tubular member.

13
14 According to a first preferred embodiment the aperture
15 is provided in a concertina-like rib of said corrugated
16 portion, most preferably in the lower rib adjacent to
17 the closed end of the expandable tubular member.
18 Preferably the lower rib is of larger external diameter
19 than the upper ribs and is adapted to seal against the
20 internal surface of the sleeve. Preferably the closed
21 end of the expandable tubular member is formed by heat
22 sealing.

23
24 According to a second preferred embodiment the aperture
25 is provided in a uniform diameter portion of the
26 expandable tubular member. Preferably the sleeve
27 comprises an upper portion of larger diameter which
28 fits around the corrugated portion of the expandable
29 tubular member and a lower portion of smaller diameter
30 which fits sealingly around the uniform diameter
31 portion of the expandable tubular member. Preferably
32 the closed end of the expandable tubular member is
33 formed by an insert, preferably a concave insert, fixed
34 inside the tubular member below the aperture.

35
36 According to a second aspect of the present invention

1 there is provided a valve comprising an expandable
2 tubular member, wherein the expandable tube member has
3 a closed end and at least one aperture therein adapted
4 to permit the expulsion of fluid under pressure from
5 the expandable tube member, and is expandable between a
6 first unexpanded state in which the aperture is closed
7 by contact with a part of the expandable tubular member
8 and a second expanded state in which the aperture is
9 open.

10

11 Preferably the expandable tubular member is of plastic,
12 most preferably of polypropylene. Preferably the
13 tubular member is of circular cross-section.

14

15 Preferably the expandable tubular member comprises a
16 corrugated portion adapted to concertina between said
17 unexpanded and expanded states. Preferably said
18 corrugated portion comprises a plurality of concertina-
19 like ribs, each rib comprising a length of tube of
20 increasing cross-sectional area and a length of tube of
21 decreasing cross-sectional area.

22

23 There may be provided more than one aperture, arranged
24 circumferentially around the expandable tubular member.

25

26 Preferably the aperture is provided in a concertina-
27 like rib of said corrugated portion, most preferably in
28 the lower rib adjacent to the closed end of the
29 expandable tubular member. Preferably the closed end
30 of the expandable tubular member is formed by heat
31 sealing.

32

33 According to a third aspect of the present invention
34 there is provided an apparatus for introducing a
35 component into a first liquid, the apparatus
36 comprising:

1 a first container for holding the first liquid having
2 an opening closed by a releasable closure,
3 a second container located in the first container and
4 containing propellant fluid, and
5 a conduit having a first end communicating with the
6 second container and a second end communicating with
7 the first container;
8 wherein the conduit contains an additive which is
9 expelled from the conduit into the first liquid by the
10 entry of the propellant fluid into the conduit on
11 release of the releasable closure;
12 and wherein the conduit is provided at its second end
13 with a valve according to the first or second aspects
14 of the present invention.

15
16 Preferably the conduit comprises a plastic tube, at the
17 lower end of which is formed the expandable tubular
18 member. A sleeve may be provided, wherein the sleeve
19 comprises a plastic tube adapted to fit around the
20 lower end of the plastic tube forming the conduit.

21
22 Preferably the conduit extends below the surface of the
23 first liquid in the first container. Alternatively the
24 conduit may extend to a position close to the wall of
25 the first container above the surface of the first
26 liquid, to avoid foaming of the liquid and the creation
27 of pressure waves in the liquid. The first container
28 may be a bottle having a neck, and the conduit may
29 extend to a position adjacent to the wall of the neck.

30
31 The conduit may contain a number of additives arranged
32 at different positions along the length of the conduit.
33 The additives are preferably liquid. The additives may
34 be colouring agents, flavouring agents, fragrances,
35 pharmaceutical components, chemicals, nutrients,
36 liquids containing gases in solution etc.

1 Examples of apparatus in accordance with the invention
2 will now be described with reference to the
3 accompanying drawings, in which:-

4
5 Figs. 1(a) to 1(e) are cross-sectional views of a
6 first embodiment of an apparatus of the invention,
7 in which the second container is integrally formed
8 in a bottle top, showing the top before screwing
9 on, during screwing on, screwed on tight, during
10 release and fully removed respectively;

11 Fig. 2 is a cross-sectional view of the embodiment
12 of Fig. 1(a) to an enlarged scale;

13 Fig. 3 is a cross-sectional view of the embodiment
14 of Fig. 1(a) showing the valve of the invention in
15 its expanded or open state;

16 Fig. 4 is a cross-sectional view of the embodiment
17 of Fig. 1(a) showing the valve of the invention in
18 its contracted or closed state;

19 Fig. 5 is a cross-sectional view through the valve
20 of Fig. 4 in its contracted or closed state;

21 Fig. 6 is a cross-sectional view through the valve
22 of Fig. 5 in its expanded or open state;

23 Fig. 7 is a cross-sectional view through a valve
24 according to a second embodiment of the invention
25 in its contracted or closed state; and

26 Fig. 8 is a cross-sectional view through the valve
27 of Fig. 7 in its expanded or open state.

28
29 Figs. 1(a) to 1(e) show an apparatus for automatically
30 dispensing a product from a dip tube to a bottle or
31 first container by means of pressurised propellant
32 stored in a tank or second container when the top is
33 removed from the bottle. The tank or second container
34 is integrally formed with a screw top which is then
35 screwed onto the bottle or first container, in the neck
36 of which is secured an insert which has a rupturing

1 spike and a dip tube.

2

3 Fig. 1(a) shows a bottle 150 having an insert 100
4 secured within the neck 160 of the bottle, shown in
5 more detail in Fig. 2. The screw cap 152 is shown
6 separately, before closure of the bottle 150. The cap
7 152 has an internal thread to mate with the external
8 thread on the neck 160 of the bottle. The cap has an
9 integrally moulded cylindrical portion which forms an
10 inner container 111, which is closed at the upper end
11 by a convex portion 112 of the cap 152, so as to resist
12 internal pressure in the inner container, and is open
13 at the lower end 113. A circumferential groove 114 is
14 provided externally at the lower end 113 of the inner
15 container 111.

16

17 A plastic ferrule 170 comprises an inner cylindrical
18 wall 172 forming a chamber which is open at its lower
19 end and closed by a foil seal or membrane 180 at its
20 upper end. The inner cylindrical wall 172 is connected
21 and sealed at its upper end to an outer cylindrical
22 wall 174, whose outside diameter is selected to fit
23 tightly within the inside diameter of the inner
24 container 111. At the lower end of the outer
25 cylindrical wall 174 is provided a return flange 176
26 which has a circumferential rib 178 adapted to
27 cooperate with the groove 114 on the outside wall of
28 the inner container 11. The inner wall 172 has upper
29 and lower sealing ribs 182, 183 which are adapted to
30 provide a pressure resistant seal against the outer
31 surface of the rupturing member 104.

32

33 The ferrule 170 is secured by a snap fit to the lower
34 end 113 of the inner container 111, to provide a
35 pressure resistant closure to the container. The inner
36 container is filled with liquid 115 and pressurised gas

1 116 in a conventional fashion, so that the inner
2 container is under internal pressure, causing the foil
3 seal 180 to bow outwards.

4
5 An insert 100 is secured by any suitable means within
6 the neck 160 of the bottle 150. The insert 100
7 comprises a substantially cylindrical housing 101 open
8 at the upper end and having a number of legs 190
9 projecting from the lower end. The housing is provided
10 with detent members 191 which engage with the inside of
11 the neck 160 of the bottle, so that the insert 100
12 cannot be readily removed. The upper end of the
13 housing has a lip 102 which is adapted to engage with a
14 recess 103 in the neck 160 of the bottle, to prevent
15 the insert from being pushed down inside the neck.

16
17 The legs 190 are connected at their lower end to a
18 hollow spike member 104, which has a small diameter
19 bore portion 105 at its upper end and a large diameter
20 bore portion 106 at its lower end. Between the legs
21 are apertures which allow the passage of liquid between
22 the spike member 104 and the side of the bottle when
23 the liquid is poured from the bottle. The number of
24 legs and intervening apertures may be two, three, four
25 or more as appropriate.

26
27 Within the wall of the small diameter bore portion 105
28 are provided a number of radial passages 108 which
29 communicate with the hollow interior of the spike 104
30 and the interior of the housing 101. Extending from
31 the bottom of the hollow rupturing member 104 is a dip
32 tube or conduit 130, surrounded by a plastic or sprung
33 steel cone washer 109 which is secured to the rupturing
34 member 104 and serves as a one-way retaining member to
35 allow the conduit 130 to be inserted up into the large
36 diameter bore 106 but to restrain it from being removed

1 in a downwards direction. The large diameter bore
2 portion 106 has an internal diameter equal to the
3 external diameter of the dip tube 130. The step
4 between the large and small diameter bore portions 105,
5 106 prevents the dip tube 30 extending into the small
6 diameter bore portion 105 and blocking the radial
7 apertures 108.

8
9 In use, the inner container 111 is filled with a liquid
10 115 and a pressurised gas 116 by means of conventional
11 technology used to fill pressurised dispenser packs,
12 commonly known as aerosol containers. Alternatively
13 the inner container 111 may be filled solely with
14 pressurised gas 116, omitting the liquid 115.

15
16 Fig. 1(b) shows the cap 152 while it is being screwed
17 on to the neck 160. On application of the closure or
18 cap 152 to the bottle 150, the inner container 111 is
19 moved downwards and the spike 104 enters the space
20 formed by the inner cylindrical wall 172 of the ferrule
21 170.

22
23 When the closure 152 is fully screwed tight on to the
24 bottle 150, the inner container 111 moves to the
25 position shown in Fig. 1(c), in which the seal member
26 154 inside the cap 152 seals tightly against the top
27 156 of the bottle neck 160. When this happens, the
28 spike 104 bursts the rupturable membrane 180 and the
29 member hollow spike extends into the inner container
30 111. In this position the liquid 115 and gas 116 are
31 prevented from escaping from the inner container 111 by
32 the ferrule 170 and spike member 104 which seal against
33 each other to prevent release of the liquid 115 and gas
34 116 from the container 111. The upper sealing rib 182
35 and lower sealing rib 183 formed inside the inner
36 cylindrical wall 172 of the ferrule 170 both seal

1 against the outer surface of the spike member 104.

2

3 The inner container 111 remains in the position shown
4 in Fig. 1(c) until a user releases the closure 152 from
5 the bottle 150. When this occurs, the inner container
6 111 moves to the position shown in Fig. 1(d). In this
7 position the upper sealing rib 182 becomes unsealed
8 from the spike member 104, but the lower sealing rib
9 183 remains in sealing contact with the outer surface
10 of the spike member, below the apertures 108. This
11 leaves an escape passage for the compressed liquid 115
12 (or gas 116), which is forced out of the container 111
13 by the pressurised gas 116 in the direction of arrows
14 184, 185, 186, between the spike member 104 and ferrule
15 170, through the radial passages 108 and into the dip
16 tube 130. The liquid 115 or gas 116 then passes
17 through the dip tube 130, expelling the concentrate or
18 additive material 131 from the dip tube 130 through the
19 valve 200, shown schematically in Figs 1 and 2, into
20 the liquid or other substance contained in the bottle
21 150. On removal of the closure 152, the inner
22 container 111 and ruptured ferrule 170 are removed from
23 the bottle 150 together, as shown in Fig. 1(e), leaving
24 the insert 100 and dip tube 130 in the bottle. The
25 insert does not impede pouring of the liquid in the
26 bottle, which can flow between the support legs 190 of
27 the insert 100.

28

29 The dip tubes 130, typically thin-walled polypropylene
30 tubes such as used in the manufacture of drinking
31 straws or similar, may be of different diameter or
32 length and may contain different predetermined doses of
33 additives.

34

35 Figs 3 to 6 show a first embodiment of the valve 200
36 provided at the lower end of the dip tube 130. The

1 lower end of the dip tube 130 is provided with a series
2 of ribs or corrugations 10, which allow the overall
3 length of the dip tube to expand and contract by a
4 concertina type action. The bottom of the dip tube is
5 sealed 135, for example by heating and twisting the dip
6 tube, or by any other suitable means.

7
8 A sleeve 12, whose internal diameter is slightly
9 greater than the external diameter of the ribs 10, has
10 an inwardly projecting return flange 14 at its upper
11 end. This flange 14 engages with the first rib 10a of
12 the series of ribs 10. The lowest rib 10z has a larger
13 external diameter than the other ribs, so that in the
14 folded or contracted state, as shown in Figs 4 and 5,
15 the rib 10z is in resilient contact with the lower end
16 of the sleeve 10. A number of apertures 18 are
17 provided in the upper portion 20 of the lower rib 10z,
18 although it is to be understood that the invention may
19 function equally well if the apertures 18 are instead
20 provided in another rib 10, near the lower end of the
21 corrugated portion. The apertures should be near the
22 lower end of the dip tube 130, in order to minimise
23 wastage, since any liquid 131 in the dip tube below the
24 apertures 18 will not be expelled through the apertures
25 18 when internal pressure is applied to the dip tube.
26 Figs 5 and 6 show two apertures, on opposite sides of
27 the dip tube 130, but in practice any number of
28 apertures 18 may be provided. When the corrugated
29 portion of the dip tube 130 is in the unexpanded state,
30 the ribs 10 are in close contact with each other, so
31 that the apertures 18 are effectively closed by contact
32 with the adjacent rib 10.

33
34 When the cap 152 is removed from the bottle 150,
35 compressed gas 116 is allowed to escape from the
36 chamber 111, through the radial passages 108 and into

1 the dip tube 130, as explained above with reference to
2 Figs 1(a) to 1(e). The pressurised gas forces the
3 internal pressure in the dip tube 130 to be higher than
4 that in the bottle 150, with the result that the
5 corrugated portion of the dip tube expands.

6
7 As the lower rib 10z expands past the lower edge 22 of
8 the sleeve 12, it is free to unfold, and the apertures
9 18 are no longer closed by close contact with the
10 adjacent rib. The liquid 131 in the dip tube is then
11 forced out of the apertures 18 under pressure in the
12 direction of arrows 24. In this way no leakage of the
13 liquid 131 in the dip tube 130 can occur from the dip
14 tube to the surrounding liquid in the bottle 150 until
15 the interior of the dip tube 130 is pressurised upon
16 removal of the cap.

17
18 In a further embodiment, the sleeve 12 may be omitted,
19 if the plastic of the dip tube 130 has sufficient
20 plastic "memory", ie if the corrugations remain closely
21 packed when the dip tube is unpressurised, so that the
22 apertures remain blocked off by close contact with an
23 adjacent rib until such time as the interior of the dip
24 tube 130 is pressurised, and the corrugations expand.

25
26 Figs 7 and 8 illustrate a further embodiment of a valve
27 200 according to the invention. The lower end of the
28 dip tube 130 is sealed by the addition of a concave
29 insert 30, bonded to the interior wall of the dip tube
30 130. The concave form is selected so that deformation
31 of the insert 30 is resisted when the interior of the
32 dip tube is pressurised. Alternatively the bottom of
33 the dip tube 130 may be sealed by heating and/or
34 twisting 135, as shown in Figs 5 and 5.

35
36 Adjacent to the lower end of the dip tube 130 is

1 provided a tubular section 32 of uniform diameter, and
2 above that a corrugated section 34 having a series of
3 ribs or corrugations 40, which allow the overall length
4 of the dip tube to expand and contract by a concertina
5 type action.

6
7 A sleeve 42 has an upper portion 44, whose internal
8 diameter is greater than the external diameter of the
9 ribs 40, and a lower portion 46, whose internal
10 diameter is just greater than the outside diameter of
11 the tubular section 32 of the dip tube 130. The top of
12 the sleeve 42 has an inwardly projecting return flange
13 48 at its upper end. This flange 48 engages with the
14 first rib 40a of the series of ribs 40. A number of
15 apertures 50 are provided in the tubular section 32,
16 near the bottom of the dip tube 130. Figs 7 and 8 show
17 two apertures, on opposite sides of the dip tube 130,
18 but in practice any number of apertures 50 may be
19 provided. The apertures 50 should be as low as
20 possible, to minimise product wastage. When the
21 corrugated portion 34 of the dip tube 130 is in the
22 unexpanded state, as shown in Fig 7, the apertures 50
23 are effectively closed by contact with the adjacent
24 sleeve portion 46.

25
26 When the cap 152 is removed from the bottle 150,
27 compressed gas 116 is allowed to escape from the
28 chamber 111, through the radial passages 108 and into
29 the dip tube 130, as explained above with reference to
30 Figs 1(a) to 1(e). The pressurised gas forces the
31 internal pressure in the dip tube 130 to be higher than
32 that in the bottle 150, with the result that the
33 corrugated portion of the dip tube expands and adopts
34 the position shown in Fig 8.

35

36 As the apertures 50 move as a result of the expansion

1 past the lower edge 52 of the sleeve 44, the apertures
2 50 are no longer closed by close contact with the
3 sleeve. The liquid 131 in the dip tube is then forced
4 out of the apertures 50 under pressure in the direction
5 of arrows 54. In this way no leakage of the liquid 131
6 in the dip tube 130 can occur from the dip tube to the
7 surrounding liquid in the bottle 150 until the interior
8 of the dip tube 130 is pressurised upon removal of the
9 cap.

10

11 It is envisaged that the dip tube valve arrangement may
12 find other applications, and the invention is not be
13 limited to use of the valve with a pressurised
14 dispensing device as shown in Figs 1(a) to 1(e).

15

16 The invention can be used with fragrances, flavouring,
17 pharmaceuticals (particularly suitable because of the
18 accurate dosage obtainable), chemicals, vitamins etc.
19 The tubes can be filled precisely at a different
20 location and then inserted into the housing at the
21 point of filling the bottles. Compressed air or other
22 gas is particularly suitable as a propellant for
23 powdered or granulated solids, so that liquid does not
24 cause the solids to adhere to the side of the dip tube.

25

26 Modifications and improvements may be incorporated
27 without departing from the scope of the invention.

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Fig. 1(a)

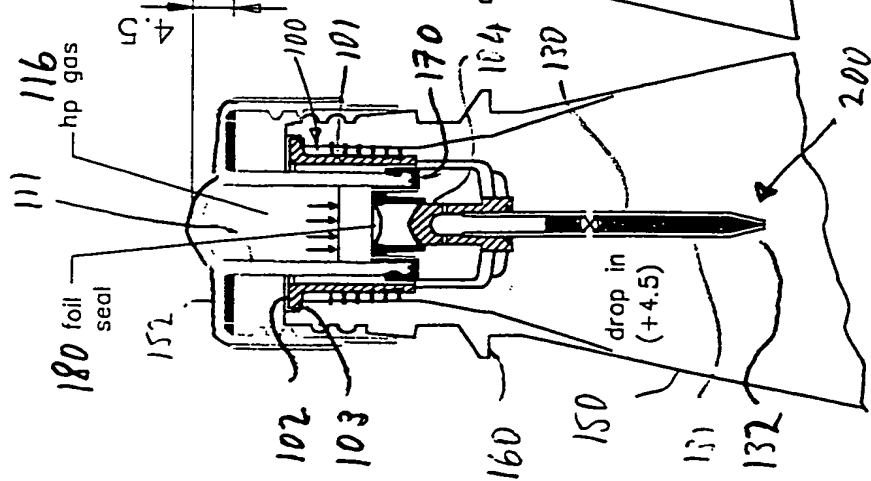


Fig. 1(b)

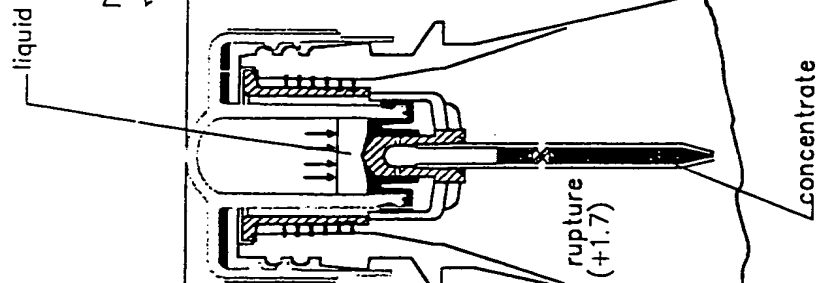


Fig. 1(c)

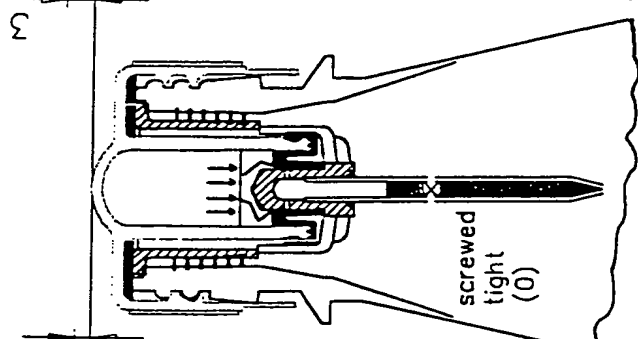


Fig. 1(d)

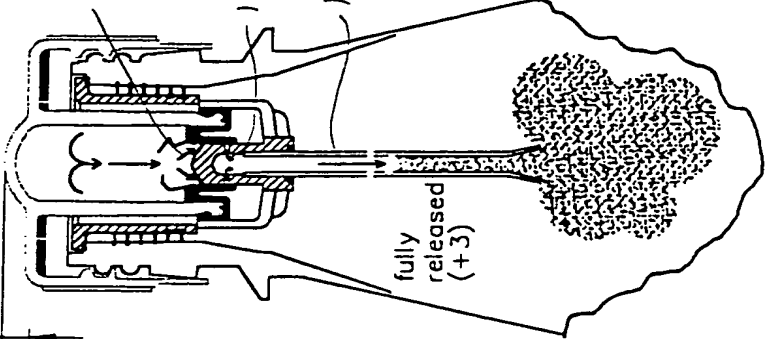
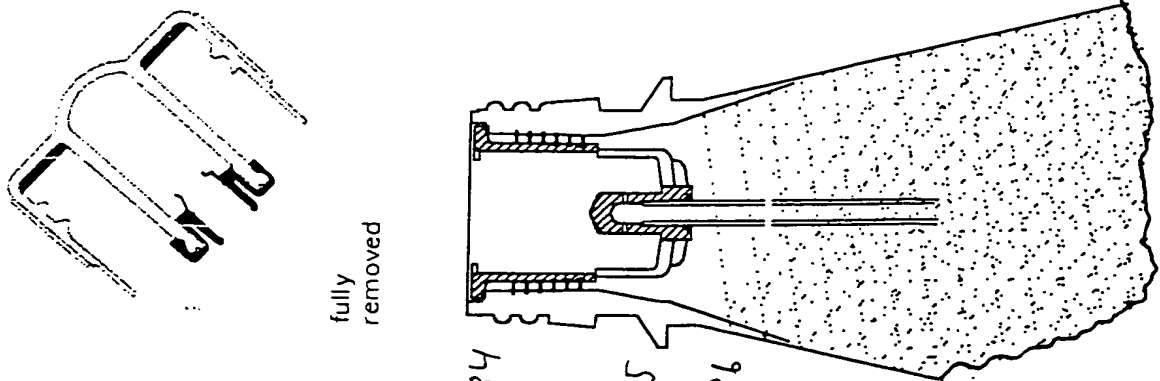


Fig. 1(e)



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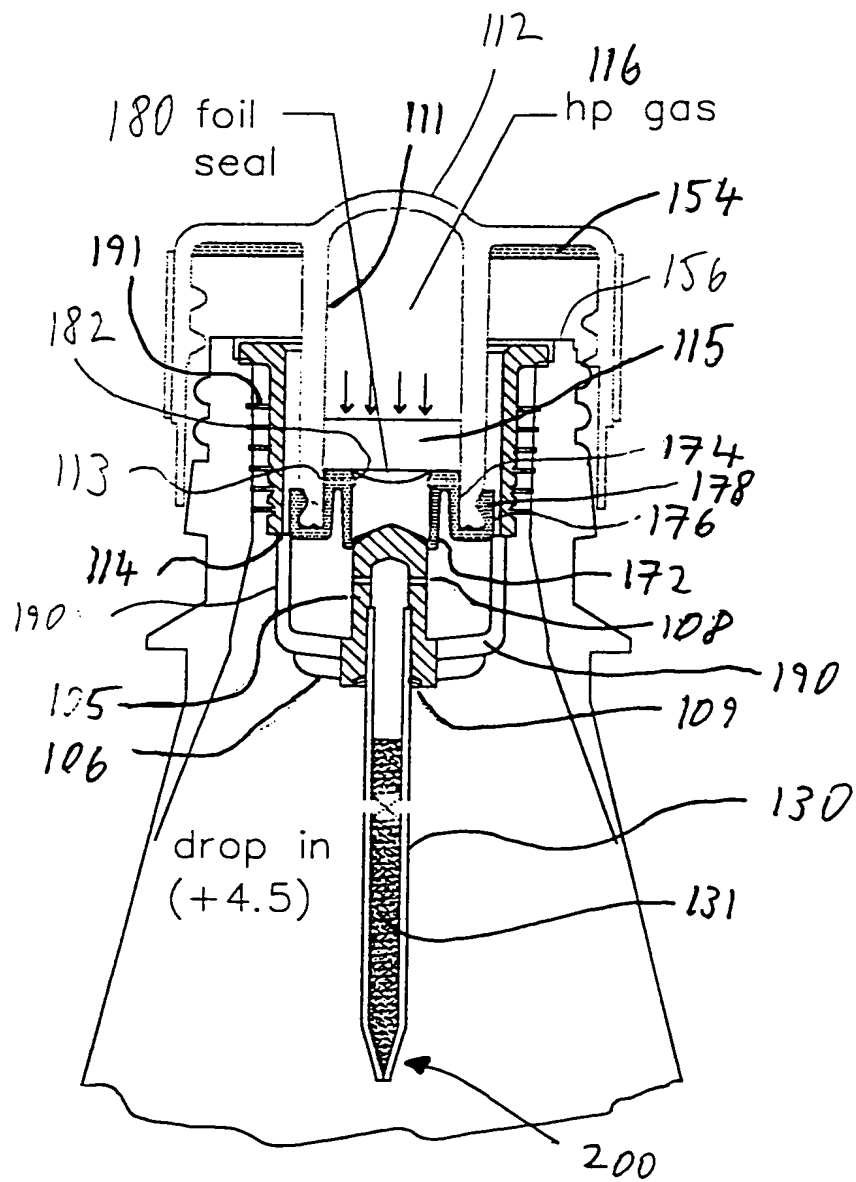
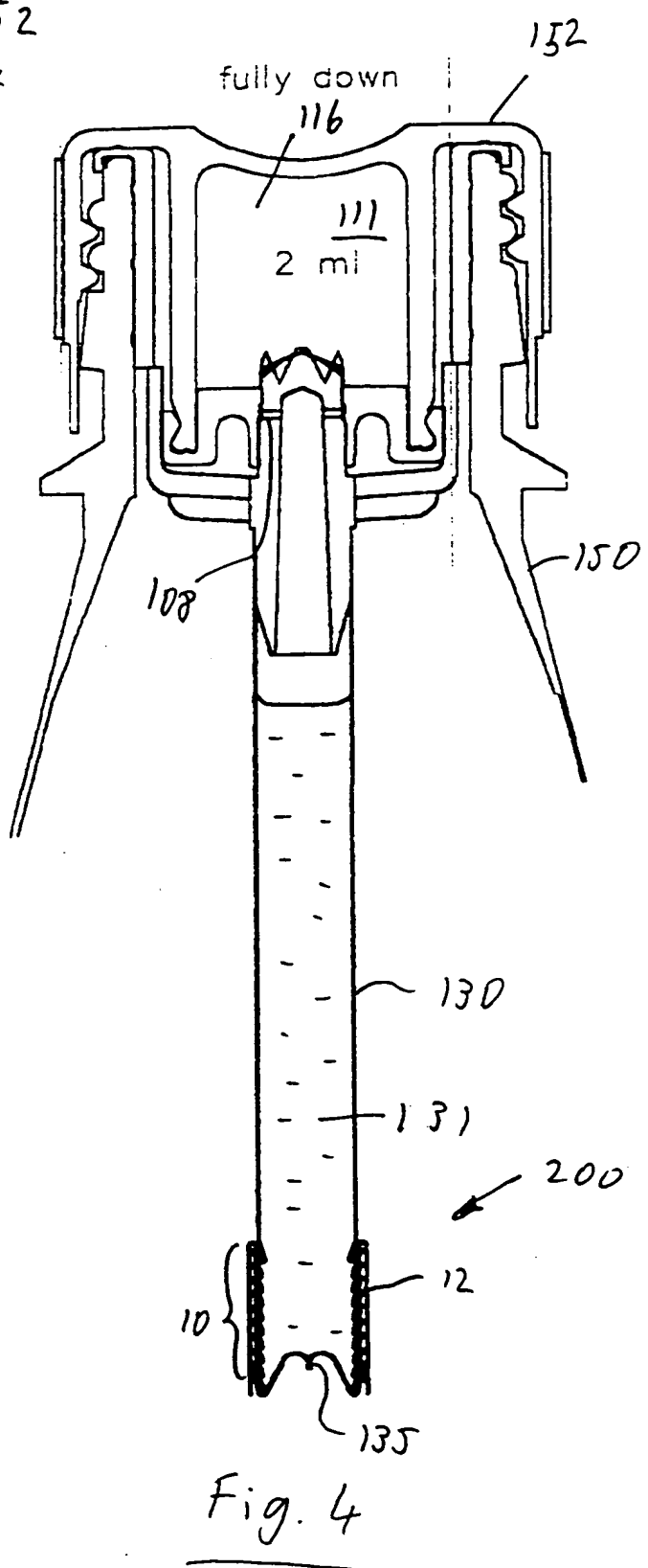
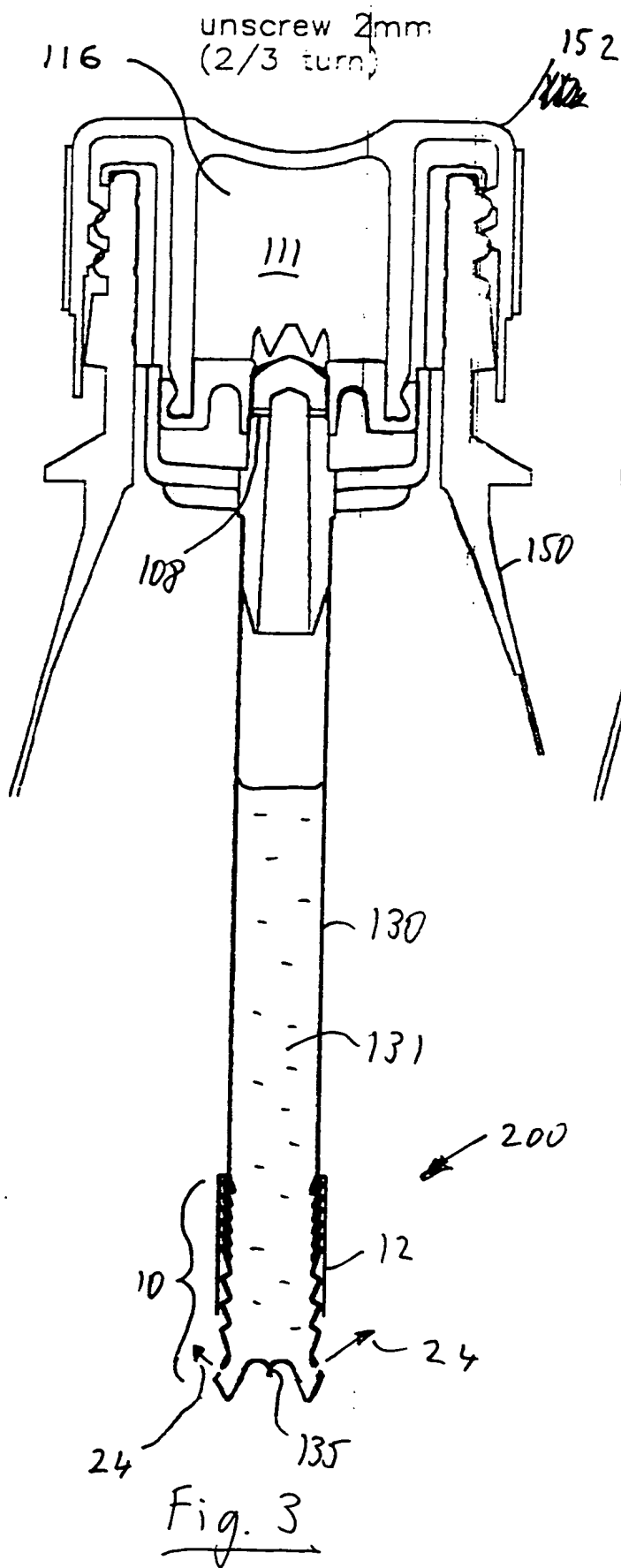


Fig. 2

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